



City Manager's Office

August 29, 2002

TO: Employees of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department

FROM: Daniel G. Hobbs, City Manager

SUBJECT: Assessment of Parks and Recreation Department

Recently, there has been a lot of public discussion regarding the future of the Parks and Recreation Department. I would like to share with each of you what is going on and why.

During the last 15 months, I have reorganized over half of the City's 15 departments. This has been done as a follow up to the Macias report findings, as well as my commitment to continuous improvement. It has also been in support of the Mayor and Council's desire that we continually look for ways to do better and to find ways to make the most of the limited tax dollars that we have.

Under the City Charter, I have the responsibility to "advise the Mayor concerning the creation, organization, conduct, operation, alteration, or abolition of the various departments, offices and agencies of the city government."

With the announced retirement of Ron Primavera in January, 2003, I am using this opportunity in the interim to conduct an assessment of the Parks and Recreation Department. Ron Primavera will continue to provide day to day management of the department, while I begin a search for his successor.

My desired outcomes:

I am interested in two goals for the department, which I believe you would share:

1. I would desire a department which enjoys even greater connectivity to the community. This means a department which is highly visible in the community; promotes and enhances community life; and is held in high regard. What that would look like has not been determined.
2. I would desire a department which has an especially close relationship with the Police Department, in order to ensure complete safety of our children in the City's parks and recreation facilities.

The assessment will address these goals as well as what you, the City Council, and the community are looking for as desired outcomes.

Council Responsibility:

I have been very clear from the beginning, that no organizational changes will be made without approval by the City Council. Under the City Charter, the Council approves department reorganizations.

Why the Police Department?

The Police Department has been selected to conduct this assessment for the following reasons:

- The Police Department recently completed an overall assessment of its operations, which included extensive intra-departmental reviews, and included extensive community surveys, community forums and feedback.
- Based on all of that information, the Police Department was restructured under the leadership of Chief Dyer.
- One of the most notable outcomes of that restructuring was freeing up the equivalent of 57 additional officers to engage in patrol.
- The stories of the Police Department's successes are reflected in additional resources being more productively utilized, as well as individual members of the department being re-energized and recommitted to their jobs.

Successful Police Assessment:

Given the Police Department's recent, successful experience with this methodology, I would like to replicate it with the Parks and Recreation Department.

- The pending retirement of Parks and Recreation Department Director Ron Primavera provides the opportunity to evaluate the future course of the department within the context of the community's needs. A similar opportunity arose in the Police Department upon the retirement of Police Chief Ed Winchester. A comprehensive assessment of the operations and management structure of the Department was undertaken, which resulted in a re-focusing and restructuring of the Department.
- The assessment model used in the Police Department provided outstanding feedback from within the organization as well as externally. In addition, the Department's staff and management personnel were complimentary of the process and the outcomes.

- Using this same approach with the Parks and Recreation Department will allow me to advise the Mayor on community needs and expectations and to establish the most effective means for addressing them. In this era of scarce resources, I support innovative initiatives and collaborative partnerships aimed at maximizing departmental performance.
- Police Captain Roger Enmark and Lt. Tony Bennink have demonstrated strong management skills within the Police Department. Both were actively involved in the Police Department's successful assessment process and will help ensure its success in Parks and Recreation. Lt. Bennick will spend 100% of his time over the next several months on the assessment. Captain Enmark will spend up to 25% of his time assisting with the assessment.
- Assistant City Manager Andy Souza, who supervises Mr. Primavera, will meet with Mr. Primavera and Lt. Bennick every two weeks to discuss the status of the assessment. I will receive a short monthly report from the assessment team.
- I believe that a strong working relationship between Police and Parks is important to our City. This assessment will allow the staff and managers from both departments to closely interact and develop a better understanding of each other's contributions and perspectives.
- Following the completion of the assessment, I will determine the next steps and so advise the Mayor. Any recommendation for significant reorganization of the Parks and Recreation Department would require City Council approval.

Coming out of this assessment, I believe we will paint a picture of what the Council and the community desire a successful, high performance Parks and Recreation Department to look like; how that would be organized; and what the desired outputs would be.

This department assessment will articulate the strengths and weaknesses of the department as perceived by the department's employees, the City Council, and the community. We will then move forward to further support the department's strengths and take steps to minimize the department's weaknesses. The actual structural outcome of what the department will be in the future will be discussed after the assessment.

In closing, I hope you find this information helpful to you in describing what we will be doing and why. I also ask for your support in taking your department to a new, exciting future. Please be a part of it.

cc: Mayor Autry
City Council
Andrew T. Souza
Ron Primavera
Jerry Dyer
Roger Enmark
Tony Bennink